man; and, if his cane was dropped, or a seat brought, he knew the ready hand that presented them. He was, however, evidently and rapidly failing; and, at length, Isabel met the interesting stranger no longer.

Three days elapsed, and her attendance on her friend became a penance. A walk was proposed, and weary of herself, she gladly became one of the party. As they passed within view of the village cemetery, her attention was arrested by a funeral procession. Their duties were finished, and they were returning; but there was one who yet lingered, and, with folded arms, leaned over the new-made grave. Could it be?—yes, it was the young stranger, and Isabel comprehended the melancholy scene! The party proceeded, and, ere their return, the surrounding landscape was flooded with the silver light of the full moon.

The feelings of Isabel were rendered yet more intense by the softening influence of the hour, and, almost unable to proceed, she leaned on the arm of her friend, whose health was yet but imperfectly restored, and fell behind her gayer companions. Again her eye was turned toward the last asylum of humanity; the solitary mourner had left the spot, and, with a faltering step, was slowly returning to the village. Their paths intersected, and he was already before her. He bowed, and both were some moments silent. He at length said, in a voice of suppressed emotion—

"The cause that brought me hither is now terminated in the grave. I leave this place to-morrow. Permit me, then, miss, even at this moment of sorrow, to thank you for the interest you have evinced in the sufferings of my departed father, and for the soothing attentions you have paid him. If the cup of affliction is ever yours, may some spirit gentle as your own temper its bitterness—some being, bright and lovely as yourself, hover around your pillow."

The young stranger uttered a stifled farewell, and striking into another path, disappeared.

On her return, the subdued Isabel was pressed to the bosom of her father. If anything at that moment could have given her pleasure, it was his arrival, as she was anxious to leave a spot that was now utterly devoid of interest. The light adieus of ceremony were easily concluded, and, early the following morning, she was equipped for departure.

As her father handed her into the carriage, he stopped to speak to an acquaintance, while a young man, who was passing at the moment, suddenly paused, and, clasping his hands, exclaimed—

"Mr. Wilton, my benefactor?"

"I do not understand you, sir," said the astonished Wilton. "I know of no one who can give me so flattering a title."

"Ah!" said the young man, whose countenance and voice were but too familiar to the trembling Isabel, "am I then so changed? I am Wilder Lee, the soldier's son, whom seven years ago you rescued from poverty."

Mr. Wilton pressed his hand with emotion.

"You mean I would have rescued, but for his intolerable pride."

"Ah, sir, evasion is unnecessary. We could not mistake the hand that relieved us. Have you, then, no interest in hearing—will you not suffer me to tell you what has been the effect of your bounty?"

"I shall gladly listen to anything in which you are concerned," said Mr. Wilton.

"Two days after you left us, my father was removed to a more comfortable dwelling, and I was entered at school. I could yet attend to the personal wants of my father; and, incited to exertion by every claim of gratitude and duty, I could but progress with my studies. I was soon a ready penman and accountant; and, a year afterwards, was received into a wealthy mercantile house as a clerk. My wages enabled me to make immediate provision for my father, and they were yearly augmented; and now," he added, in a subdued tone, "since he is called to receive far higher wealth than that of earth, my first exertion will be to discharge the pecuniary part of my obligation, which has so greatly influenced my present destiny."

"The obligation you speak of does not exist," said Mr. Wilton. "An ample equivalent was at once received, in the pleasure of assisting those who were worthy. Do not, then, wound my feelings by so unjust an allusion. But, tell me, is your venerable father no more?"

Wilder briefly sketched the late events. And Mr. Wilton now shook him warmly by the hand.

"Farewell, dear Wilder; my carriage has been some time waiting. Believe me that I rejoice in your prosperity, and remember that you may always command my friendship."

Wilder looked wistfully after him as he departed, but the form of Isabel was not visible. She had shrunk back in the carriage at his approach, and had thus escaped observation. From her father, who was himself too much excited to notice the agitation of his child, she now heard a description of his first knowledge of Wilder Lee. She made no comments, but every word was treasured up in her heart; and, though years passed away without a single event to recall his memory, every vision of her fancy, every idea of romantic excellence in the imagination of Isabel, was identified with his image. This imperishable attachment, however, partook of the high tone of her mind. It was a deep and sacred principle, hidden in the recesses of her heart, and leaving no trace on the surface of her character.

Isabel was far too lovely to remain unsought, and Mr. Wilton was astonished at her decided rejection of repeated and splendid offers. He expostulated, he entreated, he taxed her with perverseness. She deprecated his anger with seraphic gentleness. She anticipated his every wish; but her firmness remained unshaken. His attention was at length called to objects of yet deeper anxiety. His love of pleasure, his recklessness of gain, had gradually wasted an estate which, though sufficient for all the chaster elegancies of life, was inadequate to the support of prodigality.

He now stood on the verge of ruin and those who had shared his substance looked coldly and carelessly on his wreck; while the unhappy Wilton, driven to madness, could scarcely believe the perfidy of the world he had implicitly trusted. The family seat was to be publicly sold, and the fearful day arrived. While it was yet under the hammer, a new bidder appeared, apparently from a distance; his horse dripped with sweat, and his countenance was pale and agitated. The property, as usual in such cases, was going at half its value, and the stranger bid it off. Mr. Wilton was still the occupant, and the new proprietor waited on him immediately. Isabel had that moment left her father for some domestic call, and the unfortunate man was musing on their impending expulsion from their recent residence, when Wilder Lee stood suddenly before him.

"Welcome, most welcome to my heart, dearest Wilder," he exclaimed, "I can no longer welcome you to my home. You have come to witness my removal from all that was once mine. I am now here only on sufferance. To-morrow I may have no shelter for my head."

"Not so," cried Wilder, "you have yet a shelter, your home is still yours, and no earthly power can expel you from it."

"What mean you?" said the astonished Wilton.

"Fourteen years since," he replied, "you presented my father a sum which then preserved him from want, and secured my subsequent wealth. He received it but as a loan, and that debt devolved on me. True, you disclaimed it, but it was yet uncanceled. Reluctant to offend you, I delayed its discharge, though the amount was long since appropriated in my imagination for that purpose. It has not, however, lain idle. The profits of the house in which I some years ago became a partner, have been considerable. Your little capital has acquired its share, and its amount has this day redeemed your forfeited estate. By a mere accident I had seen it advertised, and I lost no time in hastening hither; and now," he added with a smile, taking the hand of Mr. Wilton, "will you not welcome your Wilder to your home? It is not long since you gave me a check on your friendship; I have come to claim it; and surely you can no longer refuse the title of my benefactor, when from your bounty I derived not only wealth, but the pleasure of this moment."

Mr. Wilton wept. The thoughtless man of the world wept at the sacred triumph of virtue. Wilder himself was overcome by the scene, and paced the floor in silence. A portrait of Isabel hung directly opposite him, and it now caught his eye. Starting back with amazement, he gazed at it as a lovely phantom. It looked indeed like a thing of life. The blue eyes seemed to beam with expression through its long dark lashes, and there was surely breath on the deep-red lip. Just so the auburn hair was parted on her white forehead when he last saw her. Just so its shining ringlets strayed over her snowy neck.

"Tell me," he at length exclaimed, turning to Mr. Wilton, "who is the original of this picture?"

Surprised at the agitation of his manner, Mr. Wilton replied—

"Have you never seen her?"

"Seen her! oh, yes; her image has long been engraved on my heart; but of her name I am yet ignorant."

"Her name is Wilton," said the astonished father. "She is my only child."

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed Wilder, "what new excitement awaits me?"

"May I ask the cause of this emotion, Wilder?" How, or in what manner, have you known my beloved Isabel?"

Wilder gave a wild and passionate description of their early and limited acquaintance, and the long-concealed attachment of his daughter was at once revealed to Mr. Wilton.

"Tell me," he said, taking the throbbing hand of his friend, "tell me, Wilder, in sacred faith, if this imperfect knowledge of my child has awakened a sentiment of tenderness."

Wilder flung himself into his arms.

"Ah, sir, have I not cherished her memory through the long seasons of utter hopelessness? Has not my spirit turned from all allurements of the world, to commune with the recollection of her virtues?"

Mr. Wilton left the room in silence, and returned with the trembling Isabel.

"You are worthy of each other," he said, and joining their hands, he invoked the blessing of Heaven on the dearest objects of his heart. He then left them to pour out his gratitude to Him who had thus redeemed the everlasting promises.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

## The Two Majors.

A STORY OF OLD TIMES IN OLD MISSISSIPPI.

In Mississippi lived an individual who held an exalted rank in the regular militia of the State. He had been duly elected major, and commissioned by his excellency the Governor, to fulfill the duties of that exalted and responsible situation. He was familiarly called Major, looked up to as a major, attended all the military balls as major, visited all the families as major, was the authority in all military matters as major, was treated by everydody—at the bar—as major, and was the most popular man in the county except the sheriff.

But in war, as in love, they are rivals, and so the Major M. M., Mississippi, militia, learned one day, when a big fellow, who had been as wild as a rum cherry tree all his life, returned from Texas, where he had been sojourning for several years. He wrote his name on the books of the hotel, "Major J. Johnson, Texas," in a conspicuous hand, and thereby astonished all his comrades and fellow townsmen. The major—the real Simon Pure M. M. major—glanced at the autograph contemptuously, and remarked that he was only a Texas major, and it wasn't no kind of use for him to put on no kind of airs; and if the Texas major ever crossed his parade grounds, he hoped to be ambuscaded if he didn't make him right and face a leetle atom quicker than he ever seed regulars do it. If he didn't we warn't a major of M. M., Mississippi militia, that's all.

One day the M. M. major was sitting on the second-story balcony of the hotel whittling a shingle, "his custom always of an afternoon," when upon his secure hour stole the Texas major, and drew a chair by his side. After a brief conversation both majors became very much excited and showed fight. The M. M. major chalenged his opponent to single combat, informing him that he could double up all the Texas majors in creation.

"The combat thickens—on ye brave."

Shouted the village lawyer, who had been attracted to the spot, as well as a number of others.

"Go it, Texas!" cried another.

"Let into him, major!" exclaimed a third. They closed, and the blows rained fast and thick upon each other's face.

"Good lick, major!" shouted the excited lawyer. "Hit him again! He's got no friends!"

"Hurrah for Texas!" yelled the Texas major, as he obtained a temporary advantage. "Where's your M. M. major now?"

Hurrah for the major!" shouted the crowd, as the champion of the "Mississippi Militia vs. All Texas," in his turn planted a good blow in his adversary's face.

"Heave him over the railin', major!" they shouted. "Hurrah!"

Both combatants fought nobly and bled freely. Now comes the tug of war, for Greek had met Greek! They clenched and struggled fiercely—they neared the railing—the Texas major had the advantage—he availed himself of it, and flung his antagonist over; and then, uttering a "Cock-a-doodle-do!" and with a "Hurrah for the Lone Star!" retired down stairs, to treat the whole bar-room.

The major was picked up in a state of insensibility, with a couple of broken ribs, and carried to bed, when the doctor was summoned to attend him, and friends crowded around his couch with brandy, camphorated spirits, hot vinegar, and other restoratives. After some time the sufferer was restored to consciousness, and raised himself up in his bed and stared around him with wild astonishment, unable to account for the crowd about him. The doctor, feeling his pulse with one hand and holding his watch in the other, gently inquired:

"Well, major, how are you now?"

"Well, I'm just so's to be able to sit up. How do you find yourself?" replied the major.

"How does your side feel, major?" continued the doctor.

"Tolerably well mashed, I consider!" replied the major.

"How is your head?"

"Aches like blue blazes!" said the major, pressing his hand to his bruised brow. "But what's it all about? How did I come in this fix?"

"Don't you recollect the events that have recently transpired?" said the doctor, "don't you recollect having a fight?"

"Well," replied the major vaguely, "'pear to me I do recollect some sort of scrimmage."

"Don't you recollect that terrible fall you had from the second story balcony?"

"Well, now I think of it," replied the major, endeavoring to collect his scattered senses, "I remember I did have a fight, and that somebody was thrown over the gallery, but I thought it was that infernal Texas major!"

## ANTI-DYSPEPTIC.

A BOY ON WASHINGTON.—Boys' compositions are often fearfully and wonderfully put together. Here's one about George Washington, that puts the "Father of his Country" on a stronger moral basis than any that has yet appeared. It serves the still further purpose of showing that where there is real irrepressible genius, great ideas somewhat precede the knack of spelling: "George Washington was a little boy that onct lived in Virginny, what had a nax give him by his old man. When George he got the nax, he cutted a tree what had cherrys up on it, and eat the cherrys, he and a nother boy. When George's old man foun out what George and the nother boy had done, he called George to him an he ses, George Washington, who cutted the bark ofen the cherry tree? George sais, I did. The old man sais, you did. George sais, I did, and I cannot tell a li. Why cant you tell a li, sais the old man? Cos, sais George, if I tell a li, this here feller 'l blow on me, and then I'll be spanked twict. Tha's rite, sais the old man; wonever you get in to trouble, the eayest way out is the best."

"PATRICK," said the priest, the Widow Maloney tells me you have stolen one of her finest pigs. Is that so?" "Yes, yer Honor." "What have you done with it?" "Killed it and ate it, yer honor." "O, Patrick, when you are brought face to face with the widow and her pig on Judgment Day, what account will you be able to give of yourself when the widow accuses you of the theft?" "Did you say the pig wou'd be there, your Riverence?" "To be sure I did." "Well, then, your Riverence, I'll say, 'Mrs. Malony, there's your pig.'"

SOME people, when they make a loss, sit down despondent; others go to work all the harder, and make a gain that more than covers the loss. There is a good moral to the following: At the battle of Shiloh, an officer rushed up to Grant, and said, "Sheneral, Schwarz's battery is took." "Well, sir," said Grant, "you spiked the guns before they were taken?" "Vat! schpike dem new guns? No, Sheneral, it would schpoil 'um." "Well, then, what did you do?" "Do! vy we went right in, and we took 'em back again."

AN IRISHMAN went to the theatre for the first time. Just as the curtain descended on the first act, a boiler in the basement exploded, and he was blown through the roof, coming down in the next street. After coming to, he asked, "An' what piece do yes play nixt?

GEN. LEE asked a straggler one day, whom he found eating green persimmons, if he did not know they were unfit for food. "I'm not eating them for food, General," replied the man. "I'm eating them to draw my stomach up to fit my rations."

"ARE you engaged?" said a gentleman to a young lady at Marysville at the ball the other evening. "I was, but if that Pete Johnson thinks I am going to sit here and see him squeeze that freckel-faced Wilkins girl's hand all the evening, he'll be mistaken, solitaire or no solitaire."

YOUNG ladies who wish to have small mouths are advised to repeat this at frequent intervals during the day: "Fanny Finch fried five floundering frogs for Francis Fowle."

A RICH but parsimonious old gentleman, on being taken to task for his uncharitableness, said, "True, I don't give much; but if you only knew how it hurts when I give anything, you wouldn't wonder."

AN Irishman having purchased an alarm clock, an acquaintance asked him what he intended to do with it. "Ocho," said he, "I've nothing to do but pull the string and wake meself."

"WILL the boy who threw the red pepper on the stove please come up here and get a present of a nice book?" said a Sunday-school superintendent in Iowa; but the boy never moved. He was a far-seeing boy.

"IS THAT the second bell?" inquired a gentleman of a colored porter. "No, sah," answered the porter, "dat am de second ringin' ov de fust bell. We hab but one bell in dis establishment."

AS AN eminent medical authority has asserted that kissing and hugging are dangerous to health, a cynical Boston paper recommends marriage as a sure preventive.